

CHARLES E. SCHUMER
NEW YORK

COMMITTEES:
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RULES

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 18, 1999

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Mr. Robert Pitofsky, Chairman
United States Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20580

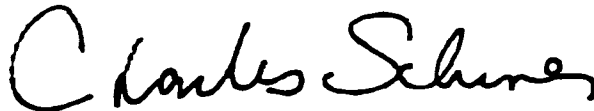
Dear Chairman Pitofsky:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the Federal Trade Commission's "Funeral Rule." As you know, this rule, which is subject to review and possible amendment by the FTC, was adopted in 1984 and requires sellers of funeral goods and services to provide itemized lists of prices for their products. The Funeral Rule was designed to enhance consumer knowledge and awareness of the industry's pricing methods and structures.

Since 1984, many changes have taken place in the funeral service industry. Specifically, businesses now exist which specialize in selling only funeral goods, not services. This includes cemeteries, burial societies, and direct sellers of merchandise. Since these businesses sell only tangible goods, they are unregulated by the FTC and most often by states as well. Since only full service funeral firms are required to comply with FTC regulations, they are subject to a significant competitive disadvantage. The current FTC review process presents a unique opportunity to correct this imbalance by amending the Funeral Rule to extend its scope to firms selling funeral goods or services. Without this change, consumers of funeral services are not fully protected in their time of need.

Thank you for your attention in this important matter.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator